



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
GUBERNATORIAL PROCLAMATION

Rhode Island Agriculture Day

WHEREAS, agriculture in Rhode Island encompasses a large and diverse nursery and horticultural industry, fruit and vegetable farms, numerous farmers markets and roadside stands, a diverse livestock industry, aquaculture, vineyards, agri-tourism and local foods; and

WHEREAS, farming is an integral part of the state's economy and provides a valuable contribution to Rhode Island's open space and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, beyond fresh and local produce, meat, nursery stock, sod and Rhode Island's own Rhody Fresh milk, agriculture contributes to tourism, open space, landscaping businesses, and a variety of food-related industries; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island was ranked number three in the country for direct marketing sales of fruits and vegetables from farms to consumers on a per farm basis and Rhode Island also had \$6.3 million worth of agriculture sales sold directly to the public, equal to 9.5 percent of all agriculture market sales, which ranked Rhode Island first in the United States for percentage of direct market sales; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island has 1,219 farms, mostly family run, which occupy 61,000 acres, and the state has approximately 40 farmers markets and other retail venues and collaborative efforts; and

WHEREAS, the recent Green Industry Economic Impact Study funded by the Department of Environmental Management and conducted by University of Rhode Island conservatively estimates that total agricultural revenues in Rhode Island are \$170.6 million, two and a half times USDA's 2007 estimate of \$65.9 million; and


WHEREAS, the Department of Environmental Management will host Rhode Island Agriculture Day at the State House on Thursday, April 25, 2013 to recognize the importance of the state's \$1.7 billion agriculture and green industries and to highlight the statewide "Get Fresh. Buy Local." campaign and farmers markets; and

WHEREAS, this year's Rhode Island Agriculture Day program will recognize the 100th anniversary of the Rhode Island Fruit Growers Association with the preview of a new documentary film on the state's apple industry entitled "Vanishing Orchards" and highlight a new initiative to promote and market local seafood as well as ongoing programs to maintain the viability of farming in Rhode Island; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Lincoln D. Chafee, Governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, do hereby proclaim April 25, 2013 as Rhode Island Agriculture Day and encourage all state residents to join me in recognizing the importance of this day.

Given under my hand and the great
seal of the State of Rhode Island
and Providence Plantations,
this 25th day of April, 2013




A. Ralph Mollis
Secretary of State


Lincoln D. Chafee
Governor